

Chapter Eleven

SOCIAL SKILLS

11.1. Understanding cultural Diversity

- The term “culturally diverse” is often used interchangeably with the concept of “multiculturalism.”
- Multiculturalism is defined as: “...a system of beliefs and behaviors that **recognizes and respects** the presence of all diverse groups in an organization or society, **acknowledges and values** their socio cultural differences, and **encourages** and enables their continued contribution within an inclusive cultural context which **empowers** all within the organization or society (Belfield, 2012).

Diversity Management

- Increase level of understanding about each other's cultures by interacting with people outside of one's own culture
- Avoid imposing values on one other that may conflict or be inconsistent with cultures.
- When interacting with others who may not be proficient in one's language, recognize that their limitations in the language proficiency in no way reflects their level of intellectual functioning.
- Recognize and understand that concepts within the helping profession, such as family, gender roles, spirituality, and emotional well-being, vary significantly among cultures and influence behavior.

Diversity management...

- Within the workplace, educational setting, and/or clinical setting, advocate for the use of materials that are representative of the various cultural groups within the local community and the society in general.
- Intervene in an appropriate manner when you observe others engaging in behaviors that show cultural insensitivity, bias, or prejudice.
- Being proactive in listening, accepting, and welcoming people and ideas that are different from your own.

11.2. Gender and Social Inclusion

- The term “sex” usually refers to biological phenomena such as hormones and reproduction.
- However, gender is an organizing principle of all social systems.

Three levels of analysis

- The individual level refers to stable traits of men and women that endure over time in the process of human life span development, such as differences believed to be rooted in biology or early childhood socialization.
- The interactional level examines the ways in which social behavior is constrained or facilitated by expectations that people have regarding the traits men and women possess, the ways they should act, and the beliefs they should hold.
- The structural level addresses how macro level patterns, such as the positions to which people are assigned in society or the rewards attached to those positions, lead to differences in the behavior or experiences of men and women.

- Nations have been denying women benefits that they should have got despite their significant contribution for the development.
- Hence, nations, right groups, nation leaders and scholars have been demanding more rights for women and inclusion of developmental activities.
- Therefore, women should benefit from education, economy, leadership system, development programs and legal system.

- ❖ Build a culture of gender inclusion across implementing the following is important.
- Encourage inclusive engagement in all areas of development and cross-cutting initiatives;
- Apply gender-inclusive approaches of development
- Promote good practices in gender inclusion; and
- Optimize resources and prosperity for all

11.3. Interpersonal Communication Skills

- It is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages.
- It is face-to-face communication.
- Defined broadly as “those skills which one needs in order to communicate effectively with another person or a group of people” (Rungapadiachy, 1999, p.193).

11.4. Social Influences

- Occurs when one person (the source) engages in some behavior (such as persuading, threatening, promising, or issuing orders) that causes another person (the target) to behave differently from how he or she would otherwise behave.
- Various outcomes can result when social influence is attempted.
- In some cases, the influencing source may produce attitude change - a change in the target's beliefs and attitudes about some issue, person, or situation.
- Attitude change is a fairly common result of social influence.
- In other cases, however, the source may not really care about changing the target's attitudes but only about securing compliance.
- Compliance occurs when the target's behavior conforms to the source's requests or demands (Delamater & Myers, 2011).

11.5. Peer Pressure

- The influence to go along with the beliefs and actions of one's peers.
- May be positive when it inspires a person to do something worthwhile.
- The desire to fit in and feel like you are part of a group is normal especially in the teen and young adult years.
- Negative peer pressure tries to get a person to do something harmful.
- It may involve threats, bribes, teasing, and name-calling.
- Peers can exert a negative pressure or a positive influence upon each other, for example: using drugs, misbehaving in class, stealing, making fun of someone, and the like.
- On the other hand, peer influence helps someone to do his/her best at school, playing sports, being inclusive, helping those in need

How to Handle Peer Pressure

- Give yourself permission to avoid people or situations that don't feel right and leave a situation that becomes uncomfortable.
- Check in with yourself. Ask, "How am I feeling about this?" "Does this seem right to me?" "What are the pros and cons of making this decision?"
- Recognize unhealthy dynamics: It's not OK for others to pressure, force, or trick you into doing things you don't want to or for others to make threats if you don't give in. It's not OK for others to mock, belittle, shame, or criticize you for your choices. You can ask others to stop these behaviors, or you can choose to avoid spending time with people who act in these ways.
- Spend time with people who respect your decisions and won't put unfair pressure on you to conform.
- Remember that you can't (and don't have to) please everyone or be liked by everyone.

How to Handle Peer Pressure

- When people or situations that make you feel pressured are not avoidable, try the "delay tactic": Give yourself time to think about your decision instead of giving an immediate answer: "Let me think about that," "Can I get back to you?" or "Check back with me in an hour."
- When you can't avoid or delay a pressure-filled situation, practice saying "No thanks" or just "No!" If "no" feels uncomfortable, practice using other responses, such as "Not today," "Maybe another time," or "Thanks, but I can't."
- It's OK to use an excuse if the truth is too challenging. For example, if someone offers you a drink and you want to say no but feel awkward, say you're on medication or have to get up early the next day.
- Take a friend who supports you along if you are going to be in a pressure-filled situation and let them know what your intentions are (e.g., "I don't want to drink, so if you see me about to, remind me that I wanted to stay sober").
- Stand up for others when you see them being pressured. "Bystander intervention" (stepping in to help out when you see someone in trouble) can be an effective way to support others and send a message. If you don't feel comfortable directly confronting the person doing the pressuring, try distracting them or inviting the person being pressured to do something else.
- Ask for advice or support from a parent or other trusted family member, a clergy person, a mentor, or a counselor if you need it.

11.6. Assertiveness

- Being open in expressing wishes, thoughts and feelings and encouraging others to do likewise.
- Listening to the views of others and responding appropriately, whether in agreement with those views or not.
- Accepting responsibilities and being able to delegate to others.
- Regularly expressing appreciation of others for what they have done or are doing.
- Being able to admit to mistakes and apologise.
- Maintaining self-control.
- Behaving as an equal to others.

11.7. Conflict and Conflict Resolution

- The absence of conflict usually signals the absence of meaningful interaction.
- Conflict by itself is neither good nor bad.
- However, **the manner in which conflict is handled** determines whether it is constructive or destructive (Deutsch & Coleman, 2000).
- Conflict is defined as an incompatibility of goals or values between two or more parties in a relationship, combined with attempts to control each other and antagonistic feelings toward each other (Fisher, 1990).
- The incompatibility or difference may exist in reality or may only be perceived by the parties involved.
- Conflict has the potential for either a great deal of destruction or much creativity and positive social change (Kriesberg, 1998).

Sources of Conflict

- **Economic conflict:** involves competing motives to attain scarce resources.
- The behavior and emotions of each party are directed toward maximizing its gain.
- **Value conflict:** involves incompatibility in ways of life, ideologies (preferences, principles and practices that people believe in).
- **Power conflict:** occurs when each party wishes to **maintain or maximize the amount of influence that it exerts in the relationship and the social setting.**
- **Ineffective communication:** Miscommunication and misunderstanding can create conflict even where there are no basic incompatibilities.

